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ABSTRACT

A retrospective comparative analysis of data collected between 1975 and 1979 was undertaken at Westmoreland County Community College (WCCC) to quantitatively determine the impact of WCCC's developmental education program on: (1) the persistence and academic performance of underprepared students; (2) the college's financial situation; and (3) the community's labor market. The term "underprepared" was used to describe those individuals scoring below the minimum acceptable grade level on English, reading, and mathematics tests that are given to all first-time WCCC students. Major findings indicate that underprepared students who participated in developmental programs held an advantage over those who did not participate by averaging an 18% higher grade point average, a 34% longer enrollment at WCCC, and a 32% better graduation rate. Since mid-1975, the developmental program generated $387,220 in revenues, while incurring $241,499 in direct expenses, thus providing a 60.4% net return. Over half of the program participants indicated that they would recommend the program to others (84%) and that the course work would be of benefit outside of the college (60%). Of the WCCC graduates who obtained jobs in fields related to their course work, only 32.1% of the program participants left Westmoreland County, while 48.5% of the underprepared non-participants did so. (JP)

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WESTMORELAND COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

EVALUATION

August, 1979

Prepared for W.C.C.C. by

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REPORT SUMMARY

This evaluation has been undertaken to quantify Westmoreland County Community College's Developmental Program in terms of its contribution to the underprepared student (as defined by the CGP entrance tests), to the College, and to the community. While the ensuing report details the study, the highlights of its findings are as follow:

STUDENT BENEFITS: Since the Program's restructuring in 1975, its participants have enjoyed a significant advantage over their underprepared counterparts by averaging an 18% higher QPA, a 34% longer enrollment at the College, and a 32% better graduation rate.

Eighty-six percent of the Program's students have felt the developmental courses improved their chances of successfully completing their academic programs.

COLLEGE BENEFITS: Those students taking the prescribed developmental courses accrue 30% more credits at the College (excluding their additional developmental course credits) than those students who have only partially taken, or completely avoided, the Developmental Program.

Since mid-1975, the Program has generated $387,220 in revenues while incurring $241,449 in direct expenses. The resulting $145,771 in net income is providing a 60.4% net return on direct expenses. (Indirect expense data is not available, but the Program would remain an income generator even if its prorated share of overhead costs reached as high as 60% of its direct costs.)

Also, the increased retention of the developmental students has helped provide an additional $208,787 in revenues over the past four years, and an estimated $336,335 may have been lost due to the lack of improved retention from those underprepared students who bypassed the prescribed developmental work during the same period.

The Program's academic reputation appears to have broad acceptance. Over 84% of the developmental students would "recommend it," and 53% of the College's faculty and staff have rated it as at least "quite effective."

COMMUNITY BENEFITS: More than 60% of the Program's students feel the developmental course work is useful to them "outside the college."

Employment data for those WCCC graduates who obtained jobs in fields relative to their course work show that only 32.1% of the Program's participants have left Westmoreland County, while 48.5% of their underprepared counterparts have done so.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

EVALUATION

BACKGROUND

In light of the Westmoreland County Community College's "open door" admission policy, the 1969 Proposed Plan for Community College of Westmoreland County mandated a Developmental Program to provide the opportunity for academically underprepared students to upgrade their competencies to college levels.

In 1972, two developmental courses were offered. In 1975, based on substantial research of students' developmental experiences and their subsequent course performance, the program was restructured and expanded utilizing the most current thinking in the field along with recommendations from the WCCC Faculty and consultants in the areas of English, reading, and mathematics.

Since 1975, WCCC has offered developmental courses in the three key areas of student developmental needs -- English (Foundations of Communications), reading (Reading and Study Skills), and mathematics (Foundations of Algebra). An annual assessment of the College's Developmental Program has been conducted among the Program's students and augmented by a WCCC faculty evaluation conducted prior to the Middle States Association of School and Colleges evaluation team visit in 1978.

While these assessments have continued to confirm the effectiveness of the WCCC Developmental Program over the past four years, the Program's importance to the credible maintenance of the College's "open door" admission policy has prompted a decision to conduct a special, more comprehensive study to quantify the specific effects of the Program relative to the students, the College, and the community.

PURPOSE

The objective of this special evaluation is to quantify the Westmoreland County Community College's Developmental Program's impact on the WCCC student, the College, and the community through the use of retrospective comparative analyses.

This evaluation will seek to determine and compare the following for the period beginning with the restructuring of the Developmental Program (September, 1975) through the present (July, 1979):

-- The completion, persistence, and performance of the underprepared WCCC students who have participated in the Developmental Program versus those who have not.

-- The cost effectiveness of the WCCC Developmental Program.

-- The contribution of the Program to the community as measured by the Program participant's success in securing productive employment within the County versus the employment data of the other underprepared students at the College.

-- Plus any other existing or new information which may provide further insight regarding the effectiveness of the Program.

This study will also include any recommendations warranted by the findings of this evaluation, regarding either the Developmental Program or further analyses that may be desired but are not within the scope or budget of this study.

METHODOLOGY

In order to eliminate any sampling bias and provide the most reliable statistical base possible, all data used in this study represent the total available statistical universe. Also, the terms "underprepared" and "deficient," as applied to WCCC students, are used to describe those individuals scoring below the minimum acceptable score on the English,

Reading, or Math CGP (Comparative Guidance and Placement) long form tests given to students enrolling at the College.[1]

Wherever possible, all evaluations of the data of those underprepared students who have completed the desired developmental course in a particular discipline (i.e., English, reading, or math) are compared to those underprepared students who, for whatever reasons, have not completed the prescribed developmental course.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The specific detailed findings of this evaluation of the impact of the Developmental Program on the WCCC student, the College, and the community are as follow:

PROGRAM BENEFITS TO THE STUDENT:

The study has revealed the following data regarding the effectiveness of the WCCC Developmental Program:

ACADEMIC SUCCESS -- Examination of the underprepared students' success at the College indicates that, since the program was restructured in 1975, those students successfully participating in the Developmental Program have enjoyed considerably better academic achievement than those equally deficient students who did not take the desired developmental courses.

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[1] Since the CGP short form exam results are not accessible, the statistical base for this study includes all students who took the long form CGP test in preparation for entry to the College between the fall semester of 1975 and the fall semester of 1978 and who scored below 45 on the English, reading, or that portion of the math test required for their course or program. Also, Nursing Program students have been excluded from this study due to their unique admissions standards.

TABLE 1

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT ATTAINMENT
ACADEMIC YEARS 1975/76 THROUGH 1978/79 COMBINED

	Underprepared Students Enrolled at WCCC			
	Without Developmental Course Participation		With Developmental Course Participation	
	Average Attainment	(Index)	Average Attainment	(Index)
Performance (QPA)	1.69	(100)	1.99	(118)
Persistence (No. of Semesters Enrolled)	2.52	(100)	3.38	(134)
Completion (% Graduating)	16.0%	(100)	21.1%	(132)

As the preceding Table shows, those deficient students involved in the Developmental Program have averaged an 18% better QPA, have been enrolled 34% longer, and have had a 32% better chance of graduating than did the underprepared students who avoided the Developmental Program.

When viewed over time, this advantage has been consistent, regardless of the year in which the developmental course was taken.

TABLE 2

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT ATTAINMENT
BY YEAR

	Underprepared Students Enrolled at WCCC			
	Without Developmental Course Participation		With Developmental Course Participation	
Year of Student Entry	Average Attainment	(Index)	Average Attainment	(Index)
Performance (QPA):				
1975/76	1.72	(100)	1.89	(110)
1976/77	1.78	(100)	2.02	(113)
1977/78	1.65	(100)	1.90	(115)
1978/79	1.60	(100)	2.20	(138)
Persistence (No. of Semesters Enrolled):				
1975/76	2.96	(100)	3.98	(134)
1976/77	2.89	(100)	3.72	(129)
1977/78	2.41	(100)	3.72	(154)
1978/79	1.69	(100)	1.88	(111)
Completion (% Graduating):				
1975/76	15.0%	(100)	23.0%	(153)
1976/77	19.8%	(100)	31.8%	(161)
1977/78	12.8%	(100)	8.0%	(62)
1978/79	-		-	

In terms of performance, the developmental course taker's average grade advantage is growing larger each successive year. The persistence and completion data reflect a consistent benefit to those deficient students taking advantage of the Program, even though their involvement does, in many cases, delay their graduation (and helps explain the fact that only eight percent of the 1977/78 Developmental students have yet to graduate while 12.8% of their underprepared classmates have done so).[1]

Finally, in evaluating the Program's effectiveness, the Program participants' success was analyzed for each developmental course offered.

TABLE 3

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT ATTAINMENT ACADEMIC YEARS 1975/76 THROUGH 1978/79 COMBINED

	English Deficient Students		Math Deficient Students		Reading Deficient Students	
	Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)
Performance (QPA)	1.44 (100)	2.00 (139)	1.78 (100)	2.00 (112)	1.82 (100)	1.96 (108)
Persistence (Number of Semesters)	2.27 (100)	3.61 (159)	2.71 (100)	3.20 (118)	2.60 (100)	3.19 (123)
Completion (% Graduating)	8.1%(100)	23.7%(293)	16.2%(100)	20.4%(126)	21.0%(100)	17.8%(85)

While all three courses provide a significant advantage for the deficient student, the developmental English (051) course affords the student an extremely impressive advantage over other students with the same deficiency. The developmental math (052) course also provides a significant advantage. And the developmental reading (050) course participants, while achieving higher grades and greater persistence than their counterparts who have not taken this developmental course, tend to fall comparatively short in their graduation rate.

Dissecting the preceding data for each course over the past four years,

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[1] WCCC does not award academic credit for developmental course work.

Table 4 shows that the effectiveness attained by the developmental English course has been both impressive and consistent. The results for the reading and math courses of the Developmental Program have been somewhat less consistent.

TABLE 4

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT ATTAINMENT BY YEAR

	English Deficient Students		Math Deficient Students		Reading Deficient Students	
Year of Student Entry	Dev. Prog. Non-Takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave. (Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave. (Index)
Performance (QPA):						
1975/76	1.55 (100)	1.81 (117)	1.72 (100)	2.06 (120)	1.81 (100)	1.91 (106)
1976/77	1.48 (100)	2.13 (144)	2.07 (100)	2.03 (98)	1.86 (100)	1.74 (94)
1977/78	1.32 (100)	2.06 (156)	1.98 (100)	1.77 (89)	1.75 (100)	1.83 (105)
1978/79	1.36 (100)	2.07 (152)	1.50 (100)	2.22 (148)	1.81 (100)	2.54 (140)
Persistence (Number of Semesters):						
1975/76	2.59 (100)	3.98 (154)	3.32 (100)	4.28 (129)	2.98 (100)	3.78 (127)
1976/77	2.76 (100)	3.86 (140)	3.00 (100)	3.72 (124)	2.93 (100)	3.40 (116)
1977/78	2.10 (100)	4.90 (233)	2.56 (100)	3.02 (118)	2.54 (100)	3.00 (118)
1978/79	1.50 (100)	1.92 (128)	1.68 (100)	1.80 (107)	1.82 (100)	1.88 (103)
Completion (% Grad.):						
1975/76	10.9% (100)	23.1% (212)	12.1% (100)	28.0% (231)	19.4% (100)	21.1% (109)
1976/77	8.3% (100)	40.0% (482)	26.4% (100)	25.5% (97)	24.7% (100)	27.3% (111)
1977/78	4.1% (100)	7.1% (173)	12.0% (100)	10.0% (83)	18.7% (100)	6.7% (36)
1978/79	-	-	-	-	-	-

Relative to the grade advantages earned by the Developmental Program participants, it is particularly interesting to note that the most recent year's statistics, for 1978/79, show the developmental student to have a grade advantage averaging between 41% and 52% over his or her counterpart who bypassed the prescribed developmental courses. Also, while the developmental students' added persistence has continued to be consistent by course and by year, their completion rate has been somewhat inconsistent.

These data suggest that the Developmental Program is extremely successful in building the underprepared individual's confidence in his or her academic ability. As a result, these students appear to have grown more

comfortable with the academic environment and, as is confirmed by the number of semesters they have maintained enrollment at the College, are taking a broader advantage of the College's course offerings.

STUDENT EVALUATION -- The ongoing student evaluations of the Developmental Program provide a clear indication as to the students' perceptions of the Program's relevance to their academic success. Of the various questions on this regular survey, one deals directly with this area -- "I feel that taking this developmental course will improve my chances for successfully completing the courses in my program or major." Over the past three years, 86.4% of those students involved in the Developmental Program expressed agreement with this statement.

TABLE 5

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENTS' REACTIONS TO THE STATEMENT: "I feel that taking this developmental course will improve my chances for successfully completing the courses in my program or major." (1975 THROUGH 1978 COMBINED)

Agree Strongly No. (%)	Agree Somewhat No. (%)	Neutral No. (%)	Disagree Somewhat No. (%)	Disagree Strongly No. (%)
168 (56.7%)	88 (29.7%)	26 (8.8%)	12 (4.1%)	2 (0.7%)

As shown below, when viewed retrospectively, the students' agreement with the statement is remaining relatively constant, but the intensity of that agreement has eased during the most recent year.

TABLE 6

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENTS' REACTION TO THE STATEMENT: "I feel that taking this developmental course will improve my chances for successfully completing the courses in my program or major." (BY YEAR)

	Agree Strongly No. (%)	Agree Somewhat No. (%)	Neutral No. (%)	Disagree Somewhat No. (%)	Disagree Strongly No. (%)
1976	60 (59.5%)	26 (25.7%)	7 (6.9%)	6 (5.9%)	2 (2.0%)
1977	74 (61.2%)	34 (28.1%)	12 (9.9%)	1 (0.8%)	- -
1978	34 (45.9%)	28 (37.8%)	7 (9.5%)	5 (6.8%)	- -

With regard to the Developmental Program's benefits to the student, the

Program provides the underprepared student with a significant improvement in performance (as measured by QPA), and a substantial improvement in persistence and completion (as measured by semesters enrolled and graduation rate, respectively). Furthermore, these actual benefits are clearly perceived by those students participating in the Developmental Program, although the intensity of that perception appears to have ebbed during the past year.

PROGRAM BENEFITS TO THE COLLEGE:

In order to evaluate what benefits the Developmental Program may be providing to Westmoreland County Community College, this study has reviewed the Program's impact on the College in terms of retention, cost, and reputation.

RETENTION -- In assessing the Program's influence on the underprepared student's sustained academic involvement, the total number of credits taken at the College (exclusive of developmental course work) has been compared for those underprepared students participating in the prescribed Developmental Program and those not doing so. As Table 7 shows, in spite of not receiving credit for their developmental course work, the developmental students have acquired an average of 30% more credits at the College than their underprepared counterparts.

TABLE 7

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT RETENTION
ACADEMIC YEARS 1975/76 THROUGH 1978/79 COMBINED

Underprepared Students Enrolled at WCCC					
Without Developmental Course Participation			With Developmental Course Participation		
Total Credits*	No. of Students	Average Credits (Index)	Total Credits*	No. of Students	Average Credits (Index)
17,189	728	23.61 (100)	13,838	451	30.68 (130)

* Excludes any credit for developmental courses. If these paid credits for Developmental Program participation are included, the Average Credit figures rise to 24.97 and 35.74 respectively -- a 143 index advantage for the underprepared student taking the prescribed courses within the Developmental Program.

Analyzing this average credit per student data over the past four years shows, in Table 8, that the average underprepared student consistently accrues a far greater number of credits as a result of participation in the Developmental Program.

TABLE 8

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT RETENTION BY YEAR

Year of Student Entry	Underprepared Students Enrolled at WCCC: Without Developmental Course Participation Ave. Credits*	(Index)	With Developmental Course Participation Ave. Credits*	(Index)
1975/76	25.63	(100)	37.24	(145)
1976/77	29.87	(100)	38.56	(130)
1977/78	20.16	(100)	26.62	(132)
1978/79	17.47	(100)	18.29	(105)

* Excludes any credit for developmental course work.

A comparison of this credit accumulation data by developmental course is presented in Table 9. Each of the three course's participants have averaged a greater number of credits than those underprepared students who have failed to participate in the desired developmental courses. Once again, developmental English comfortably leads the Developmental Program's courses.

TABLE 9

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE EFFECT ON UNDERPREPARED STUDENT RETENTION

Developmental Course	Average Credits per Student Deficient Students: Dev. Prog. Non-takers Ave.*	(Index)	Dev. Prog. Takers Ave.*	(Index)
English	19.11	(100)	33.06	(173)
Math	25.08	(100)	29.15	(116)
Reading	25.91	(100)	27.71	(107)

* Excludes any credit fof developmental course work

COST EFFECTIVENESS -- In order to determine the Developmental Program's financial contribution to, or drain from, the College's budget, an extensive cost effectiveness analysis was completed as part of this

study and is summarized in Table 10.[1]

TABLE 10

WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM INCOME/EXPENSE ANALYSIS

ACCOUNTED FOR BY WCCC DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

	Tuition Income	+	County Support	+	State Support	=	Total Income	-	Direct Expenses	=	Net Income
1975/76	$24,938		$28,458		$31,000		$ 84,396		$36,609		$47,787
1976/77	27,309		26,182		26,500		79,991		57,012		22,979
1977/78	35,796		34,569		34,500		104,865		62,431		42,434
1978/79	41.902		39,500		36,500		117,968		85,397(est)		32,571
TOTALS	$129,945		$128,775		$127,500		$387,220		$241,449		$145,771

*Direct Expenses represent those costs directly attributable to the Developmental Program and include: staff salaries (including 25% of the Program Director's prorated salary), instructional supplies, office supplies, telephone, travel, duplicating, and printing expenses.

As shown above, during the past four academic years since the Program's restructuring, the Developmental Program has generated $387,220 in revenues to the College while absorbing $241,449 in direct costs. This has resulted in a net income to the College of $142,771 and represents a $1.60 return for each $1.00 of direct expenses committed to the Program -- a 60.4% net return on direct expenses.

Indirect, or overhead, expenses (e.g., general plant operation costs, fringe benefits, debt service, administrative salaries and expenses, etc.) are not prorated by course or program at WCCC. However, even if these expenses were prorated and the Developmental Program's share approached an amount equal to up to 60% of its direct expenses, the Program would still remain a net income generator for the College.

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[1] The elements of the financial analysis of the Program were derived as follow: Tuition income is based on actual tuition credit hours (less withdrawal refunds) and were calculated semestrially on the basis of student status and prevailing tuition rates at the College. Governmental support (both County and State) represent actual reimbursements allocated on the basis of the number of reimbursable FTE (Full-time Equivalent) students.

In addition, an estimate can be made of the extra tuition and governmental support income generated by the fact that developmental students are more likely to continue at the College and thus provide additional tuition and support income. As can be learned from the previously presented Table 7 (page 9 of this report), the developmental student averages 30% more credits (exclusive of developmental courses) than his or her counterpart who did not take the desired courses; this amounts to an average of 7.07 more actual credits taken by students completing the Program. Over the past four years, the additional credits have accounted for $208,787 in additional revenue for the College.[1] Conversely, during the same period, if the underprepared Program non-participants had taken the Program and acquired the 7.07 extra credits that the developmental students had accumulated, the result would have been an estimated additional $336,335 in the College's income.[2]

ACADEMIC REPUTATION -- While the existence of a Developmental Program and its already proven effects on underprepared student achievement both obviously enhance the College's academic reputation, it is difficult to quantify the Program's influence on the College's external reputation.

Two sources of data, however, are available which provide some indication as to the Program's academic reputation within the WCCC community of students and faculty.

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[1] This figure is calculated as follows: The number of developmental students listed in Table 7 -- 451 X 7.07 (the average additional non-developmental credits taken per developmental student) X $23.81 (the average part-time credit rate over the four-year period) + [133 (FTE students) X $999 (the combined average County and State reimbursements per FTE student)] = $208,786.85.

[2] Based on the 728 underprepared students listed as Program non-participants in Table 7 and using the same tuition and governmental support calculations used in the previous footnote -- i.e., 728 X 7.07 X $23.81 + [214 (the revised FTE students based on the 728 figure) X $999] = $336,335.11.

One question on the regular student assessments of the Program indicates their acceptance of it as an effective academic tool and their willingness to actively promote it among their friends.

TABLE 11

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENTS' REACTION TO THE STATEMENT: "If a friend of mine was having difficulty with his/her college work, I would recommend that he/she go to the [Developmental] learning lab."

	Agree Strongly		Agree Somewhat		Neutral		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1976	66	66.0%	18	18.0%	13	13.0%	2	2.0%	1	1.0%
1977	85	71.4%	23	19.4%	9	7.6%	1	0.8%	1	0.8%
1979	38	52.1%	17	23.2%	16	21.9%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%
AVERAGE		64.7%		19.9%		13.0%		1.4%		1.0%

Over 84% of the students responding to the question in Table 11 during the past three years indicate agree to their willingness to recommend the Program to a classmate having difficulty. While this is an exceptionally high favorable response to the query, it should again be noted that the intensity of the agreement with the statement (as indicated by the "Agree Strongly" responses) has weakened during the most recent year.

A study conducted among the faculty and staff of the College in 1977 indicates a similarly favorable evaluation of the Developmental Program.

TABLE 12

FACULTY AND STAFF REACTION TO THE STATEMENT: "I would evaluate the developmental studies program in this institution as:"

Not Effective		Slightly Effective		Moderately Effective		Quite Effective		Extremely Effective	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
-	-	3	8.8%	13	38.2%	15	44.2%	3	8.8%

The fact that more than half of this more select and objective group rated the Program as at least "Quite Effective" (and less than nine percent saw it as less than "Moderately Effective") indicates that the faculty, as well as the Developmental Program students see the Program

as a valuable part of the College's academic structure.

In net, the Program's contribution to the College is quite an important one. Developmental students take an average of 30% more credits (43% if their developmental course work is included) than the underprepared students who evade the Program. It is cost effective, returning to the College $1.60 in revenue for each $1.00 of direct expenses invested in the Program. And its academic reputation appears strong among both the students and faculty of the College.

PROGRAM BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY:

Within the College's unique responsibility to the residents of Westmoreland County, the Program's success -- in providing the underprepared student with a substantially increased opportunity for improved academic performance, educational persistence, and graduation realization -- confirms the College's sincere and effective commitment to its "open door" admission policy. In addition, the high cost effectiveness of the Program reflects an exceptionally efficient use of the County's public funds.

In terms of the College's educational relevancy to the community, there are two sources of information which shed some light on the Program's contribution in this area -- the student evaluations and an analysis of the place of employment of those underprepared students who graduated and, six months following their graduation, were working in fields directly related to their study at WCCC.

STUDENT EVALUATION -- A statement on the Developmental Program Student Questionnaire deals directly with the usefulness of the Program to the student's activities outside of the College and is presented in Table 13 on the following page.

TABLE 13

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENTS' REACTION TO THE STATEMENT: "I feel that taking this developmental course is useful to me in my daily life outside the college."*

	Agree Strongly		Agree Somewhat		Neutral		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1976	38	38.4%	25	25.2%	23	23.2%	8	8.1%	5	5.1%
1977	50	42.4%	21	26.3%	29	24.6%	8	6.7%	-	-
1978	28	36.9%	20	26.3%	15	19.7%	7	9.2%	6	7.9%
AVERAGE		39.6%		25.9%		22.9%		7.8%		3.8%

*The questionnaire used in 1976 presented the statement in the negative form -- "I feel that taking this developmental course will be of little benefit to me in my daily life outside the college." For this Table, these responses were reversed to coincide with the positive phrasing presented in this Table and in the 1977 and 1978 surveys.

Over 60% of the Program's students responding to the questionnaire have consistently seen it as helpful in their non-academic daily lives, presumably within their local communities. Once again, however, as was the case with both previously referenced responses on these surveys, the intensity of this positive reaction to the Developmental Program has weakened slightly during the most recent academic year.

GRADUATE JOB PLACEMENT -- An analysis of the employment data provided by a regular survey of graduates six months after their graduation provides some further indication of the Program's relevance to the student and to Westmoreland County.

TABLE 14

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM EFFECT ON WCCC GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT RELATIVE TO WESTMORELAND COUNTY

	Graduates of WCCC who were underprepared at entry and were employed in a field relative to their course of study within six-months of their graduation.					
	Total		Employed within Westmoreland County		Employed outside Westmoreland County	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Developmental Program Takers	28	100%	19	67.9%	9	32.1%
Developmental Program Non-takers	33	100%	17	51.5%	16	48.5%

While the nature of this data is such as to preclude any definitive conclusions (since these surveys can not account for at least 10% of the graduates), it does appear that there may be a tendency for the developmental course participant's increased involvement with the College to translate, after graduation, to a generally stronger tie to the County itself.

The students' assessments and the graduate employment surveys both tend to indicate that the Developmental Program is providing community benefits even beyond its cost effectiveness and its critical role relative to the College's "open door" policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing findings, the following recommendations appear to warrant consideration for the reasons given:

1. INCREASE EFFORTS TO INSURE THAT ALL UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM, because it:

   -- Provides the underprepared student with a considerably better opportunity to improve his or her total academic achievement.

   -- Increases WCCC revenues due to the higher retention and course enrollment (beyond the developmental course work) of the underprepared students who have completed the Program.

   -- Enables the maintenance of high academic standards in all courses by better preparing the deficient student for subsequent course work.

2. AGGRESSIVELY PROMOTE, THROUGHOUT WESTMORELAND COUNTY, THE AVAILABILITY AND SUCCESS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM, in order to:

   -- Encourage underprepared students to proceed with higher educational aspirations.

   -- Confirm the College's commitment to its "open door" admission policy.

-- Provide support for the Program in light of an apparent weakening respect among the students (as indicated by the recent decline in the intensity of developmental students' agreement with positive statements regarding the Program).

3. CONSIDER OFFERING DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES AS A COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM TO ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS, since doing so will:

   -- Recognize the College's unique responsibility as the only higher education institution within Westmoreland County having a commitment to the County's total educational environment.

   -- Introduce to WCCC potential students who might not otherwise get exposure to the College.

4. REVIEW THE CURRENTLY OFFERED DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES TO DETERMINE IF THEY CAN BE BROUGHT UP TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL ENGLISH COURSE, in order to:

   -- Realize the full potential of the Developmental Program by bringing each developmental course to the highest possible level of effectiveness.

In addition, from our involvement with this study, we offer the following two suggestions:

1. CONSIDER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDARDIZED COST EFFECTIVENESS MEASURING APPROACH AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL TO HELP DETERMINE THE APPLICATION OF NEW OR EXISTING FUNDS.

   As has been shown by the cost effectiveness analysis portion of this study, a working knowledge of the revenue generated by a particular program or activity can provide valuable insight for budget allocating purposes, particularly when several academically sound programs are competing for new funds. (However, while it is a very useful management tool, cost effectiveness considerations can not be permitted to override the academic and community responsibilities of the College.)

2. REVIEW THE COLLEGE'S COMPUTERIZED RECORD-KEEPING SYSTEM TO ASSESS THE ACCESSABILITY OF KEY DATA.

   This study relied almost entirely on hand-tabulated data. As the College enters the tenth year since its founding, its statistical record-keeping needs may be changing. A greater demand may now exist for evaluative data which, if not readily obtainable, may discourage future studies of this type.

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